

DARPA-18-02-02 AIRA
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
as of 10/18/2018

10Q: Is it a requirement for proposers to provide edits to the Other Transaction Agreement at the time of the submittal of the proposal? The PA seems to suggest that DARPA and a proposer, if receiving an award, would have the ability to negotiate at a later date.

10A: DARPA and a selected performer(s) will be negotiating the OT prior to award. However, Proposers must review the model OT for Prototype agreement prior to submitting a proposal and suggest edits to the model OT for consideration by DARPA and provide a copy of the model OT with track changes as part of their proposal package.

DARPA has provided the model OT in order to expedite the negotiation and award process and ensure DARPA achieves the AIE goal of rapid program starts enabling DARPA to initiate a new investment in less than 90 days from idea inception.

DARPA may choose to not award an OT to a selected performer if pre-award negotiations impact DARPA's ability to meet the timeline goal for AIE. For that reason, it benefits Proposers to follow instructions in the PA and opportunity notice.

9Q: The Task Description Document indicates it has no page limit; however, the instructions for Volume 1 Tech Mgt Volume state that the Task Description document should be contained within the 8 pages of Volume 1. Would it be appropriate to include a summarized description of tasks within Volume 1, along with a reference to the fully detailed tasks in the Task Description Document which would be attached with the application?

9A: It is acceptable to include a summarized description of tasks within Volume 1, along with a reference to the fully detailed tasks in the Task Description Document which would be submitted as an attachment with the application.

8Q: The DARPA-PA-18-02-02 opportunity states that there are 2 phases, each are 9 months, yet the Price Summary Spreadsheet template does not correspond with two 9-month periods. Is it an 18 month project?

8A: Please edit/adjust the Price Summary Spreadsheet template as necessary to reflect the 2 phase lengths as described in DARPA-PA-18-02-02 (AIRA)

7Q: Are the national labs eligible to apply to the AIRA program? The language, "At the present time, DARPA does not consider 15 U.S.C. § 3710a to be sufficient legal authority to show eligibility" seems to suggest that national labs are not eligible:

7A: National labs may submit a proposal if the national lab (or any other Government entity) is able to clearly demonstrate that the proposed work is not otherwise available from the private sector, and the national lab can provide written documentation as part of their proposal citing the specific statutory authority and contractual authority, if relevant, establishing their ability to propose to Government solicitations. This information is required for Government Entities proposing to be awardees or subawardees. As noted in DARPA-PA-18-02, Government Entities (e.g., Government/National laboratories, military educational institutions, etc.) are subject to applicable direct competition limitations.

6A: We would like to know if a proposal based around this framework would be a good fit for the upcoming AIRA call.

6A: DARPA cannot provide feedback on specific ideas at this time while the solicitation is active. If you can rephrase your question in a manner suitable for posting as an FAQ, we will attempt to answer the more general version in that venue.

5Q: What is the requirement for co-funding if the proposer is a small business or a startup?

5A: There is no requirement for providing cost share if the proposer is a small business because small businesses meet the definition of “nontraditional defense contractor” as defined by 10 U.S.C. § 2302(9) and, thus, meet one of the conditions required under 10 U.S.C. § 2371b. Additionally, an OT for prototype under 10 U.S.C. § 2371b can be awarded without the cost share requirement when all significant participants in the transaction other than the Federal Government are small businesses (including small businesses participating in a program described under section H. R. 2810—213 9 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638)) or nontraditional defense contractors.

4Q: Can you please clarify what indirect costs/F&A/G&A rates we should be using? Would it be the standard federally negotiated MTDC rates? Or is the rate different because the award type would be an Other Transaction (OT)? Also, how do we capture these indirect costs in the Volume 2 budget documents?

4A: Proposers should use the indirect rates that they would normally use in developing a proposal in response to a Government solicitation. Proposers may provide additional cost or pricing data to support their proposed price. The Government expects proposing organizations may include indirect costs and profit as part of their price for their Phase I and Phase II proposal submission. The Government anticipates that the indirect costs and profit, if proposed, would be added to the direct labor rates and other direct costs in accordance with an organization’s accounting and estimating practices. For example, the direct labor rates proposed in the MS Excel Price Summary Spreadsheet may include, or be burdened with, fringe, overhead, G&A and profit, when appropriate. Proposers may edit the Price Summary Spreadsheet to show how total direct and indirect costs are calculated by adding rows to the spreadsheet when needed.

3Q: I would like the opportunity to meet with you at DARPA for 30 minutes and pitch the idea face to face.

3A: We are sorry, but given the compressed timeline of this AIE Opportunity, we are unable to hold individual conversations with potential proposers. Additionally, we require all proposals in written format; please see the opportunity announcement Section IV on page 7: “Responses to this AIE Opportunity must be submitted as full proposals to DARPA-PA-18-02 as described therein. All proposals must be unclassified.”

2Q: Would a proposal to develop an AI system for discovering laws governing cellular responses to chemical entities be within the scope? Does the scope only include areas directly mentioned in the call?

2A: The scope of the call only includes the areas mentioned in the call. However, as mentioned on page 3, one of several domains of interest is "circadian- or cell-cycle-driven cellular biology." Since much of cellular biology is driven or influenced either directly or indirectly by circadian and/or cell-cycle clocks and dynamics, you may broadly interpret this to mean that cellular biology is an acceptable application domain.

1Q: Can I set up a phone call to discuss my ideas before submitting a proposal?

1A: Given the compressed timeline of this AIE Opportunity, we are unable to hold individual conversations with potential proposers; however, if you have any questions regarding specific ideas, please e-mail AIRA@darpa.mil.